FR. SOL. Est il impossible d'eschapper la force de
ton bras ?
PIST. Brass* cur[b]!

suggested itself to me more than once: and yet I fear it is what Dr. Warburton calls (in a note on Othello) a *White Friars' phrase*, of Alsatian origin, and consequently much more modern than the age of Shakspeare.

Mr. M. Mason's idea, however, may receive countenance from a passage in Timon:

" *Tim.* Cut my heart in sums.
Tit. Mine, fifty talents.
Tim. Tell out my blood.
" *Luc.* Five thousand crowns, my lord.
" *Tim. Five thousand drops pay that.*"

STEEVENS.

[5] BRASS, cur!] Either Shakspeare had very little knowledge in the French language, or his over-fondness for punning led him, in this place, contrary to his own judgment, into an error. Almost every one knows that the French word *bras* is pronounced *bran*; and what resemblance of sound does this bear *to brass*, that Pistol should reply, "Brass, cur?" The joke would appear to a reader, but could scarce be discovered in the performance of the play.

SIR W. RAWLINSON.

If the pronunciation of the French language be not changed since Shakspeare's time, which is not unlikely, it may be suspected that some other man wrote the French scenes. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson makes a doubt, whether the pronunciation of the French language may not be changed since Shakspeare's time: "if not (says he), it may be suspected that some other man wrote the French scenes;" but this does not appear to be the case, at least in this termination, from the rules of the grammarians, or the practice of the poets. I am certain of the former from the French *Alphabeth* of De la Mothe, and the Orthoepia Gallica of John Eliot: and of the latter from the rhymes of Marot, Ronsard, and Du Bartas. Connections of this kind were very common. Shakspeare himself assisted Ben Jonson in his Sejanus, as it was originally written; and Fletcher in his Two Noble Kinsmen. FARMER.

Mr. Bowie has at least rendered doubtful the question concerning the different pronunciation of the French language. See Archæologia, vol. vi. p. 76. DOUCE*

The word *may* proves, in my apprehension, decisively, that Shakspeare, or whoever furnished him with his

French, (if indeed he was assisted by any one,) was unacquainted with the true pronunciation of that language. *Mov* he has, in King Richard II. made a rhyme to *destroy*, so that it is clear that he supposed it was pronounced exactly as it is spelled, as he here supposes *bras* to be pronounced;